

# WRESTLING FORUM

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## *WRESTLING'S BEST KEPT SECRET*

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# ONE ~~MORE~~ <sup>year</sup> ^ TIME

I've kept track. This is the eighteenth attempt to write this page. This is my last issue as editor of Wrestling Forum.

When I started this bulletin back in February of 1986, I didn't know anything about publishing a twice a month bulletin. Dave Meltzer was out there doing his, but I didn't know it. There was no one really to blaze the trail for a new bulletin. We blazed the trail, made mistakes and taught others. At last count, there were more than thirty privately published bulletins on professional wrestling on the market.

I'm proud to have been part of the history of pro wrestling as we know it. It used to be that promoters could get away with just about anything they wanted. Then came the bulletins who pointed out flaws and inaccuracies. They didn't like it, but they came to respect us.

Wrestling Forum did all right for the first three and a half years. Then things started to slide. I became an outcast among some of the smart fans because of some of the views that I held. I chastised fans for not being able to think for themselves. I tried to unite fans and promoters with a group called the United Association of Wrestling Fans which not only fell flat on its face in concept, but financially cost me nearly \$2000. I refused to change formats when going weekly would have been a) more timely for news, b) more profitable for me, and c) taken more time from my family. The result was going from the number 2 rated bulletin on the market to out of the top five. I could handle that because my family was more important to me than running a wrestling sheet.

I've learned a lot over the past five and a half years. I've made some very valuable friendships. Ed Garea, Sean Grande, Sean Hendrick, Dave Meltzer, Bob Clauson, Ferk, KW, Ken Snider, Joel Kolsrud, Steve Sims, Royal Duncan, Sam DeCero, Eddie Sharkey, Dave Orlich, Wade Keller, Ron Lemieux, Paul Zacovic, Ed Hammond, a bunch of wrestlers (who I was tempted to name, but I'll still honor our trust), Bruce Grummert, Shannon Rose, Paul Spiegel, and no doubt others who I've left out, have all meant a great deal to me over the years. I've made several friendships, only to lose them over trivial things like the UAWF.

In the past five and half years, you've watched my daughter Kelly go from a spoiled two year old to a second grader; you've been on hand for the birth of my second daughter, Erin (nearly caused a divorce when I wanted to name her "Chigusa") who is now two and a half; you were there to support me when my dad died.

We've shared a lot of laughs over the years. We shared tears as well.

Wrestling Forum was a part of my life that will always be fondly remembered. We hope you have fond memories of us to.

Oh, enough of this! The new guys have something to say and I promised them space. They're a little PO'd, because they came all the way down from Chicago Monday night to watch SummerScam, figuring I'd shell out the thirty bucks for it, and found me watching my Dodgers beat up on the Cubs. Well, here they are:

BILL: You want names? Too bad. We will not give out our real names, but Jon has convinced us that since there are two of us, we need some sort of names to keep us straight.

TED: So, guess what you can call us. Hey! I heard that!

BILL: Bill and Ted will do fine for now.

TED: Yeah. Bill and Ted's Excellent Newsletter.

BOTH: So here's the deal (can you believe it? Four runs in the ninth inning? For those of you who have seen Jon sitting back at wrestling matches, feet up on the chair in front of him, acting like he's bored out of his skull, you should see him watching baseball. It's two different people!):

This is still Wrestling Forum, and it will remain Wrestling Forum. The size and price will remain the same, although we'll be doing some things to upgrade the quality and content, based on the responses to the readership survey we asked you to fill out.

We're going to continue to use Jon's post office box in Knoxville for a while. This is because of part of the payment arrangement we made with him. Also, Jon is going to handle the subscriptions for us for a while until we find a way to get on a computer.

**SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION:** To subscribe, or renew, just follow the regular procedure. *Wrestling Forum* will continue to be published on or about the 15th and 30th of each month. Price is \$1.50 per issue. You can send in for up to six months worth at once. All checks should now be made out to WRESTLING FORUM. Until further notice, send all renewals, results, news, clippings or whatever to **WRESTLING FORUM, BOX 65, KNOXVILLE, IL 61448.**

If you have something for us, send it to the above address. If you have something for Jon, put his name on it. He'll be forwarding correspondence to us about once a week.

That's all we've got to say. We'll be with you in a couple weeks for the new and improved Wrestling Forum! Be there with us, please!

## I•N•D•E•P•E•N•D•E•N•T•L•Y S•P•E•A•K•I•N•G

Sam DeCero's Windy City Wrestling will be doing a show locally this week at the Warren County Prime Beef Festival in Monmouth, IL (about 25 miles from here). I'll have a full report next time for our new editors.

Eddie Gilbert looks like he will start to work for a new promotion opening up in the Memphis area. The group doesn't have TV at this point (usually not a good sign) but will be running regular weekly cards at the Pitkin Building, the facility that Jarretts just gave up. Although they don't have TV yet, they are doing tapes somewhere in Mississippi and will run Memphis on Thursday nights. The name of the group is Central All Star Wrestling.

Verne Gagne is threatening to run shows again. At least, he's contacted a couple of wrestlers I know about working a couple of cards in the fall. They were not given specific dates, but were told that it would be October and/or November.

David Moser, who wrestled in the ICW as Chief Thunder Mountain, died of a massive heart attack last week. Of course, the first rumor to hit the grapevine was that the heart attack was induced by steroids, but there is no evidence at this point one way or another. It should be noted that he was well over the 400 pound mark. Moser was only 28 years old.

Steve Lawler, who has worked for most of the independent groups has undergone a name change. He's going to be doing a judge, jury and executioner type gimmick and his new name will be William (Willie) Chetham (no doubt from the law firm of Dewey, Chetham and Howe).

Last issue we told you that indy promoter Joel Goodhart was telling fans that he would have a match with Terry Funk taking on a certain former world champion on his next card. He was trying to get people to think he was bringing in Ric Flair. Flair was not signed to the card and as a result, the card on 9/21 will be headlined by Funk vs Kevin Sullivan. I wonder if Goodhart is trying out for a position with WCW given his advertising practices.

Dennis Coraluzzo promoted a card on 8/17 in Camden, NJ which headlined with Terry Funk vs Bob Backlund. Backlund won the match which went nearly a half hour. Two separate sources reported the card at over 1500. The card also featured the "retirement" match of Monster Factory owner Larry Sharpe who beat Cowboy Bob Orton via pinfall. Orton had outside interference, but it backfired allowing Sharpe to win.

After the card, Bob Backlund spent about an hour in the ring, signing autographs and talking with fans. He looks great and was "very open in a kay fabe way."



## GLOBAL WRESTLING FEDERATION

5

The Patriot won the tournament for the North American belt, but the way he did it left a bad taste in some people's mouths. The ending was a little messed up because no one's timing was quite right, but what was supposed to happen was this: Patriot was to pin Al Perez but Perez was to get his foot up on the ropes. The ref was supposed to notice this, but as I understand it, he forgot to look up and counted to three anyway. Patriot, however was looking right at the foot on the ropes and it made him look bad to the fans live. The end result has Patriot refusing to take the belt and offering Perez a rematch.

The ESPN schedule has been relaxed a little so Pedicino isn't having to do so much taping all at once. It looks like after some special programming gets done with, the Supercard will be broadcast three times per week. Wrestling is not a high priority item on ESPN's list, so that may change as well.

Weekly tapings are taking a bit of a toll on the boys here. Many are complaining of fatigue and most are pretty glad they aren't running a full schedule.

After Pedicino spent a bunch of money fixing up the Sportatorium to be acceptable on TV as the Globaldome, he may pull the TV tapings from that building. Most of the wrestlers in this group are from the immediate Atlanta area, so Joe is searching for a place locally from which to do the tapings each week.

At least one other promoter has been approached by Pedicino to run cards under his banner. It's a strange deal that works this way, if I understand it correctly:

The promoter can use the GWF name in promoting. In exchange for that, the promoter agrees to send tapes to Pedicino for his wrestling block on Atlanta TV. Pedicino can then use these tapes to scout other promotions for talent. Pedicino will plug upcoming shows for the promoter as well as lending talent.

The only problem I foresee is that ESPN has, in the past, had a policy about announcing upcoming shows. They see it as advertising and tell the promotions that their regular sponsors are upset because they have to pay for that time. Wrestling is TV's original hour long infomercial, so that should tell you just how in touch ESPN is with its programming. If a promotion can't use TV time to plug upcoming live events, then it's a wasted hour.

In other news, Skandar Akbar is in, wearing a suit and tie. He claims that he is not the "Boss" of the cartel, but somehow I can't believe that. Since I'm in the majority there, knowing Pedicino, he'll pull a swerve and being in someone else as the Boss just to keep all us critics in our place.

# // // PENCIL POINTS // //



## OPEN LETTER TO JACK PETRICK

*Editor's note: The following letter came in a couple weeks back. Although I doubt that a letter writing campaign will help matters any, I agreed to print the letter anyway.*

Dear Mr. Petrick;

For the past five years, I have enthusiastically supported the NWA/WCW. I have attended shows regularly when you came to town; I have traveled up to 300 miles to see shows in other towns; I have faithfully watched both syndicated shows and your WTBS show; I have paid for every Pay Per View you have offered since the first Bunkhouse Stampede; I have subscribed to NWA roundup; I have purchased souvenirs at live shows.

As a dedicated fan, I feel I should have some voice in how your company is run as I have invested more than a thousand dollars in it.

In the past three years, I have watched helplessly as Jim Herd single handedly destroyed the company and my enjoyment of WCW wrestling. His refusal to negotiate new contracts with Terry Funk, Ricky Steamboat, the Road Warriors, the Midnight Express & Jim Cornette and most recently with Ric Flair only proves that Mr. Herd is more concerned with his personal interests rather than what interests the fans. The hiring of Dusty Rhodes as booker after he bankrupted Jim Crockett Promotions is clear evidence that Mr. Herd does not belong in his position of power.

As of this date, I will no long watch WCW broadcasts. I will no longer purchase Pay Per View broadcasts. I will no longer buy WCW merchandise or magazines. If WCW can't give me what I want, I can't give them what they want (my money). I will continue my boycott until Mr. Herd and Mr. Rhodes are replaced by competent individuals.

I will take things one step further. I will make note of all sponsors who advertise on your broadcasts (I will watch long enough to do that). I will write each and every one of them, explaining why myself and hundreds of wrestling fans won't be watching their commercials because we won't be watching your shows. In addition to this, I will be writing to the station manager of any television stations that carry your broadcasts and inform them of the same decision.

Until you start giving me as a fan, what I want to see, I see no reason in financing your failures.

•STEVE DECKER•

•Penn Hills, PA•

PS to Wrestling Forum readers: I suggest that you copy

this letter and send it to World Championship Wrestling with your name signed to it. As a group, we may have more bargaining power than as individuals. A petition among fans in your area may help as well.

### SNAKE BIT

I just saw the angle where Jake's snake bites Ultimate Warrior. I, personally, thought it was a disgusting angle, not to mention unbelievable.

Snakes and coffins? The dark side? Come on! What ever happened to a shocking change of attitude during a match? Or a sneak attack? Or any of a million other ways to turn somebody.

There were so many holes in that angle with the snake that you could drive a truck through them. I won't go into them, but rest assured, this will be my choice for Worst Angle of the Year.

•ERIC HOYME•  
•INDIANAPOLIS, IN•

### BAIT AND SWITCH II

Those who are foolish enough to spend their money to attend WCW shows get exactly what they deserve. We've all seen Jim Herd's total disregard for truth in advertising when they bill Ricky Steamboat for a PPV months after he's left. We are familiar with the situation described in *Forum* and other newsletters about promised matches that never come about. We see how six weeks after Ric Flair is fired, they continue to mention his name during their tour spots.

This does not happen in the WWF. When a wrestler doesn't appear, we offer refunds most of the time – always, if the no show is a main eventer. We supply substitute matches of equal entertainment value when ever possible.

We may treat our fans like complete idiots when it comes to angles, but we never intentionally rip off a customer by promising something we know we can't produce.

Of all the major newsletters, *Wrestling Forum* is the ONLY newsletter that has treated us fairly in this regard throughout the years. While you are quick to point an accusing finger, you are also quick to point out good work by our athletes, good promotion on our part, and entertaining angles.

Others will jump on our bandwagon now that we have Flair. I just wanted to thank you for what you've done in your tenure as editor.

As for WCW, there is an old adage that applies: There are three types of businessmen: those who make things happen, those who watch things happen and those who stand around with their finger up their ass and wonder what happened.

Guess which category Jim Herd falls into.

•NAME WITHHELD BY EDITOR•  
•STAMFORD, CT•

## World Championship Wrestling

Remember how Johnny B Badd turned babyface without the benefit of an actual turn? Well, forget it. He's back to being a heel again, another one of Dusty's abrupt turnabouts in his booking philosophy (and yes, I realize Dusty and Booking Philosophy are mutually exclusive terms). He was scheduled to feud with Steve Austin over the TV title, but Johnny's back to wrestling babyfaces again and Austin will feud instead with (guess who?) Dustin Rhodes. Nothing like working for a company where nepotism is placed above loyalty, huh?

One insider is telling us a rather strange scenario. It seems that Jim Herd's contract runs through January of this year and Turner is not interested in replacing him before that time. This insider claims that Herd will be let go after that time and there will be a job opening within the company for a newsletter editor who has been trying to hook up with WCW since he began doing a sheet. It certainly ain't me, folks. I've heard of no one else thinking of giving up their newsletter either. My source would not reveal names, though only one comes to mind. We'll see.

The Flair situation continues to be clouded, though, in all probability, he'll be signing a contract with Titan this weekend. My sources tell me that Flair had hoped that something would open up with WCW in the eleventh hour, but it's five minutes till eleven right now and nothing seems to have changed. The other option that was mentioned to me is that Flair, since WCW owns the trademark on his name, will not sign an actual contract with Titan but only work for them on a handshake agreement. Somehow, I don't see that happening, because personally, I wouldn't trust either side. There should be more information next issue.

Brian Pillman is in a little trouble for allegedly using a forged prescription to purchase steroids. He was arrested and released on bond, although the charge of using a forged prescription is a federal offense. This, combined with Jim Herd's policy on steroids, helps put yet another nail in the WCW coffin.

Ken Snider sent in a report from Chicago and the Bash show that toured there. In the show, Bobby Eaton pinned Steve Austin in nine minutes. Actual time was 8:47 from bell to bell. The bout was billed as a match for the TV title. However, after the bout, it was announced that the title did not change hands because Eaton had to win within ten minutes. So, how do they get out of this? Easy. They announce the official time of over eleven minutes.

Now you know why I'm burned out on wrestling. Basically we have a choice between a cartoon or the biggest ripoff artists on the face of the earth.

The main event going around the horn after the Bashes are over will be Lex Luger and Mr. Hughes vs Barry Windham & Ron Simmons. Again, I'm at a loss on how to explain the logic here. If you want to get your champion over, you don't hide him in tag matches. That's what they did with Sting, that's what they did with Flair. Both experiments were miserable failures. I guess the answer is that the management just doesn't learn from its mistakes.

You know, I was watching the WCW show and something hit me out of the blue. They ran down the top ten. Innocent enough, right? Except that if I had to scrape so low to list some of the guys they had listed, I wouldn't bother listing a top ten; I'd be too embarrassed. It wasn't quite as bad as the AWA listing their top seventy five when they started the team concept, but still pretty slim pickin's.

The TBS show on Saturday may be screwed up for a while. With SEC football starting and the Braves still playing baseball, wrestling is getting squeezed out. It'll be this way for about four weeks or so.

Sting had another box waiting for him when he came out for a Danger Zone interview. This one was supposed to have had Bam Bam Bigelow in it, but Bam Bam decided not to come in as planned (Gee, I can't imagine why). Instead, they had a girl in the box who had a message for Sting. Basically it was a warning for him to get out of wrestling. He kisses her and walks off with nothing else happening.

To get Windham over as a baby, they've done another angle. This one has Dustin Rhodes wrestling Diamond Studd. Steve Austin ends the match doing a run in, but there to make the save is Barry Windham. Dustin is reluctant to accept his help, so out comes Daddy Dearest to assure his son that Barry has indeed seen the light.

You can probably add Nikita Koloff to the list of wrestlers who the management has failed to renegotiate a contract with. His contract expires in the next thirty days and those close to the negotiations say that it appears unlikely that the two sides will come to an agreement.

Next Clash is 9/5 and the new guys tell me they'll have a novel way of covering the action for you here. No idea what it is.

Sting is the new US champion, defeating Steve Austin in a one night tournament at Atlanta's Omni on 8/25. In WCW's growing tradition of ripping fans off, the tournament featured several matches, including the championship match, that lasted less than five minutes. I guess the guys realize they aren't being paid by the hour.

More pink slips handed out by Herd; Robert Gibson, Kevin Sullivan, Big Daddy Dink and Diamond Dallas Paige have all been released and more to follow. Paige will continue to work as a TV announcer, as if they don't have enough of those already.

Dick Murdoch is among those rumored to be on the chopping block. He and Herd have had several confrontations with Murdoch telling Herd he hasn't got a clue as to what he's doing. Truth hurts, I guess.

# Phantom of the Ring

by Ed Garea

## HISTORY OF THE STEREOTYPE PART III

When we last left wrestling, it was in the Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression of the Thirties was about to crash in and nearly bankrupt the game.

The middle class was broke; those who still had money chose to spend it on other worthwhile amusements, such as baseball, boxing and football. The wrestling crowd had narrowed to the working classes. the underswelling of ethnics that Pfeffer had pandered to in the 20's was to become the mainstay of fan support in the 30's. From the 30's onward, promoters would be guided by the working-class mentality in their concept of the game. To begin with, the working-class was not nearly as educated as the middle-class gentry and, so, the first thing was the pure imitation of a sport. In its stead came the morality play, with hero versus villain.

Now, this had come before the 30's. The late Teens and the early 20's saw the advent of the rule breaker, but it was never on such a large scale as during the 30's. History, or what passes for history in wrestling, records that Rudy Dusek was the first big time heel. It is most interesting to note that Rudy developed on the carnny circuit, for in the future, 98% of the heels were to develop in this manner. (Also let it be noted for the record that the "carnny circuit" also includes training schools run by the wrestlers.) Big name amateurs were still recruited, but they would become glamorous babyfaces. The wrestler who worked his way up the ranks without the benefit of an established reputation usually began as a heel and remained that way throughout his career. It was easier to get the boos and be hated than to try to appeal to the crowd with somewhat dubious skills and an unknown face and name.

Thus, if a Jim Browning entered the sport with his tremendous amateur background and media fame, he would automatically be a babyface. Stan Kowalski, on the other hand, would usually be cast as a heel. If he didn't look particularly Polish, his name might be changed to Bonebreaker Smith. If he looked really Polish, he would don a hood and wrestle as the Masked Marvel. If Stan could really wrestle and was over with the fans (a tricky proposition, this, for a Pole might be a popular hero in Milwaukee, with a large Polish population, but bomb in Irish Boston), he would be brought along slowly. The advent of the tag-team helped this process along considerably, for Stan could now be hidden in a team with a more experienced wrestler who would make sure Stan learned his ABCs.

The Thirties also saw the debut of a another modern-day staple of wrestling: the wrestling stereotype. Whereas in the past, many ethnic wrestlers were used and pushed by various promoters, the promoters were careful not to present them in anything but the best possible light. Not so with non-white wrestlers; for them, the rules of fair play were out the window.

The first known stereotype was one Chief Bearclaws Chewacki, who

debuted in California sometime in 1937. In real life Chewacki was Benny Tenario, A Chicano wrestler who was born to soon to wrestle as himself. So, in order to work he had to don the Indian feathers and war-whoop it up. Tenario later went on to a distinguished career in the ring, but only as various Indian characters. His best known character was Chief Kit Fox, which he used all over the world. He was a big hit wit this character Down Under, where an American Indian was a strange sight. Here in the U.S., the idea of an Indian wrestler was indeed a novelty, and for the most part, Indians were babyfaces. The only way African-Americans could wrestle whites in the Thirties and Forties was in the guise of an Indian. In a display of tackiness not limited to the wrestling world, they were usually billed as being from the "Blackfoot" tribe. For wrestling was still a white man's world.

The next to suffer the stereotypical paintbrush were Asians. Until the Thirties, Asian wrestlers were looked upon with respect, and sometimes awe, as in the case of the Great Gama. Matsada Sorakichi, the great Japanese wrestler who toured the States during the 1880s, was billed as one of the greatest champions who ever donned the tights. Japanese wrestlers were few in the Twenties, confined mostly to the West Coast, but highly respected and allowed to wrestle without resort to self-parody. Keep in mind that Hollywood generally treated the Asian with respect; witness Charlie Chan or Mr. Moto, or even Fu Manchu (though no Asian actor was allowed to play these roles). African-Americans, on the other hand, were treated with disdain at best and outright humiliation at worst.

In the late Thirties, Jack Pfeffer introduced the idea of the turbaned Hindu who wrestled dirty. Pfeffer was no doubt inspired by the huge success of "Gunga Din" and was probably the first promoter who cashed in on a popular movie. (Just sit back and consider how many wrestling characters have been inspired by hit movies.) The character went over big, and inspired Pfeffer to expand with Arab parodies. One of his characters, Ali Baba, was actually allowed to win the world's championship. Paul Bowser countered in 1938 with Sheik Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia, get it?) who was supposed to be dark, dashing and a great fighter. He was none of these, however, and soon disappeared from the mat.

As the Second World War approached, there came with it a definite change - for the worse. Japanese wrestlers were now exclusively heels, if they could get work at all. The change didn't affect German or Italian wrestlers, there were too many German and Italian customers for that to change. And besides, they were Americans and the Japanese were not, even though the Japanese wrestling in the States were born in America. (But also note that their place of birth didn't exactly stop them from being interred in concentration camps during the war.)

World War II was to change everything for wrestling. The matches lacked the usual ballyhoo due to the war, and heels were pretty much in the stock mold. It wasn't until the advent of television that wrestling reaped the full benefits of the War's aftermath and the stereotype as such took on mythic proportions.



with help from **Bill Burnett**

Jerry Lawler has lost his Unified Title once again, this time to the Dragon Master. The latest title change took place in the Mid South Coliseum on the 26th of August, but since the two are scheduled to face each other again on the Labor Day card, I expect Lawler to take the belt back.

Dragon Master is being managed by Chris "Honey" Love who has blamed Lawler for him losing his income when the AWA and WCCW closed up shop. On the 26th, he was at ringside for Dragon Master (who is around 7' tall) and he grabbed Lawler's leg as Jerry went for a bodyslam. DM fell on top of Lawler for the pin and the title change. Love announced the following week that he was taking over the promotion and that there would be a few changes. First, Lawler was given his two week's notice. Second, there is now to be a dress code at the matches: Ladies will wear evening gowns and gentlemen will wear tuxedos. I'm not sure what wrestling fans are supposed to wear (just a joke, folks).

Bill Dundee won the light heavyweight championship over Danny Davis and has held it for more than a week. Wow! He's claiming that he'll be the one to go to Japan on September 7th to defend it, but they are also matched again on the 9/2 card (5th or 6th week in a row) so that could change.

Humongous was unmasked on TV this past week. He was attacked by Bull Pain and Samantha during an interview and had his hockey mask pulled off. Dave Brown and Michael St. John informed us that they recognized him as He Man Randy Lewis, and I'm sure glad they recognized him, because no one else in the world, including Randy's mother, did.

Dirty White Boy is back in action, teaming now with Jimmy Valiant in a feud with Eric Embry and Tom Pritchard. Jimmy is now covered with body tattoos which look anything but professionally done. Across his upper stomach are 4-5" letters reading, "COME TO PAPA." Wanna guess what his blood alcohol level was when he got that done? Anyway, he came out on the 8/24 show, kissing everyone; fans, announcers, refs, you name it. He did away with his jobber in about ten seconds which prompted Michael St. John to remark, "Gee, our kisses lasted longer than that match." Never in the history of live television has someone wanted to retract a statement quite as bad as Mr. St. John.

The Labor Day card is called "Star Wars" and will feature 14 matches including a girls lingerie match and a double ring, triple chance battle royal plus four title matches. Prices were upped by a buck for this card.

Dutch Mantell back in and the first words out of his mouth were, "Have you seen Stan Hansen? I've looked all over WCW for him!"



# World Wrestling Federation

## ULTIMATE WARRIOR FIRED FOLLOWING SUMMERSLAM

Jim Helwig, better known as the Ultimate Warrior has been suspended for the next 90 days. That's the official story, though insiders at Titan headquarters tell me that he will not be back.

Following Summerslam, Warrior was notified that he was, for all intents and purposes, fired. The firing comes on the heels of a contract dispute in which Warrior tried to wrangle a new contract out of Titan. Reports are that he wanted a seven figure income and less dates. It had been reported that Warrior was given his new contract and as a matter of fact, many of his fellow wrestlers had the impression that he had signed a three year contract. Because of the rumored clauses in that contract called for him to word mainly weekend shows, the boys had started calling him "Weekend Warrior."

There won't be a lot of tears shed by WWF wrestlers over the firing. Most of the boys complained to each other about Warriors's attitude and his only real friend in Titan was Kerry Von Erich. I'm told that Warrior was not comfortable in his role and was especially uncomfortable whenever he had to go out and do PR work, like with children.

The only thing that really surprises me is that they didn't have him stick around long enough to lose to Hogan since he's the only official wrestler with a pinfall win over Hulk (but he won't be acknowledged as such anymore if he is gone).

Now, let's back up just a bit and take a look at SummerScam. The Phantom Ed Garea and I will do a tag team analysis once again.

### WEIRD SCENES INSIDE THE GOLD MINE

ED: Another SummerScam has come and (thankfully) gone. I can only say that this was the best SummerScam since...well, the last SummerScam, I guess. This year, SummerScam truly lived up to its name in that we were incessantly bombarded with plugs to call Randy & Liz and talk to their pre recorded voices as they describe their big day. All one had to do was call 1-900-A-RIPOFF and for \$1.49 for the first minute and 99 cents thereafter, you can have the pleasure of Vince hoovering your wallet. With Vince, wrestling is a distant second to whatever scam he's running at the moment. And it shows, as we run down (both figuratively and literally) the card.

### KOKO B WARE VS KATO

ED: this was the warm-up match for the live crowd. We didn't get to see it and give much thanks for that. Am I glad I didn't buy a ticket. Because they had the good sense not to air this, I can only give this match an A+

JON: Hold on there, Ed. Take a look at what we're going to be watching in a little while. I'd take this match any day over the third match on the PPV. As a matter of fact, I'd take Baron Von Raschke & Dick the Bruiser vs Moose Cholak & Oz over that.

## STEAMBOAT, VON EAR ACHE, DAVEY ROID

VS

## POWER, GLORY, WIDELOAD

**ED:** The babies were introduced individually, the heels seems as if they snuck in the back door. Guess who's going to win? Ricky dives through the air to pin Roma and provide the thrills while Bobby Heenan tells us all how great Ricky is and provides the shills. In his silly dragon costume plus his ridiculous fire breathing act, Steamboat comes off as the poor man's Godzilla.

**GRADE:** D-

**JON:** I wasn't excited when the announced the match, and I sure wasn't excited watching it. **GRADE:** D

**ED:** Our announcers for this foray into the bizarre are Gorilla Monsoon, Bobby Heenan, and Roddy Piper. Gorilla wastes no time hawking the 900 number, but Bobby inadvertently spills the truth when he questions as to why anyone would even want to call the number and further questions the expenses. Truth in advertising? Have the steroid revelations shaken the WWF that much?

## BRET HART VS CURT HENNIG

**ED:** Bret comes out dressed like a reject from Sgt. Pepper, Curt has to listen to Tolos blowing his brains out on that whistle for the last time. Bret gives his sunglasses to the plant in the audience and Gorilla points out the presence of Stu Hart in the stands. Samuel Morse couldn't have telegraphed the outcome any better. Great match, though. Easily the best on *this* card. Bret and Curt do such a great job of working around Curt's back that we are almost led to believe that Curt doesn't have a bad back. I find it most interesting that both Curt loses on the same day that Andre Agassi loses in the US Open. Al Hayes interviews Stu after the match when Bret comes up to be congratulated in a display of family togetherness. Stu proceeds to run the gamut of emotion from A to B. **GRADE:** A+

**JON:** It was good, but not that good. We're just comparing this match to the rest of the card. Of course, we can blame the shortness and everything else that was wrong on Curt's bad back. **GRADE:** B+

## NATURAL DISASTERS VS SHEEPWHACKERS

**ED:** It is now comedy time. LOW comedy time. And you can't get lower than these four, right? Oh yes, you can, Add Andre to the mix and you have a real loser. For a moment after watching the Hart-Hennig match, I thought I might be watching the wrong Pay-Per-View. However, this match straightened me out real quick. The highlight comes when Roddy Piper describes the Bushwhackers as "real Americana." Only a Canadian would describe two New Zealanders in that manner. Earthquake mercifully ends the match when he sits on Luke for the pin. Considering their wrestling ability, are the Natural Disasters aptly named, or what? Andre does absolutely nothing during the match. It's almost as if he were wrestling again. **GRADE:** ZZZZZ

**JON:** Watching this was a violation of my constitutional rights under

15  
the 8th amendment. I'll accept an out of court settlement. Say, \$29.95 or so? **GRADE: ZZZZZ** One of the worst of all time

### **TED DIBIASE VS VIRGIL**

**ED:** This was a match straight out of "Saturday Night's Main Event", complete with built in commercial break as Sherri is banished to the dressing room. Every stop was pulled out in this match, reversal of DQ, ref bump, interference. And it still didn't help. Nothing could help this match, not even Ted. Virgil wins the Million Rhinestone Belt. The audience loses. **GRADE: F**

**JON:** It's hard to believe that Soul Train spent all that time watching Ted and never learned a damn thing. Ted made up for it and I found the spots (all except Sherri's banishment) entertaining. **GRADE: D+**

### **BOSSMAN VS MOUNTIE**

**ED:** Who cares? Was there anyone out there who didn't know how this would end? Even the youngest fan had to realize that the good guy just doesn't go to the slammer. That is one of the primary rules of melodrama. While Bossman seemed a little anticlimactic about the whole thing, the Mountie was in fin histrionic form, the cops had to keep from busting a gut while they "hailed" him off to the hoosegow. I just hope the New York Department of Corrections was well paid for this nonsense. **GRADE: F-**

**JON:** Neither guy seemed inspired, but more or less just went through the motions. It wasn't that bad, but, as Ed said, anticlimactic. Then again, maybe I'm comparing it to the rest of the card. **GRADE: C-**

### **NASTY BOYS VS ROAD WARRIORS**

**ED:** Lots of posturing, lots of brawling, lots of boredom. Not much fun. For some reason, the Roadies always disappoint me. For a team with their size and hype, they never live up to billing. The Nasties, on the other hand, never disappoint me. I never expect anything from them, so I am never disappointed. This match was so predictable that even Carnac the Magnificent didn't need his envelope to call it. Doesn't anyone get to keep their titles anymore? **GRADE: D+**

**JON:** A good brawl, but the Roadies have lost a lot over the last few years. I have no idea what Vince thinks he's doing making them tag team champs; they can't draw anymore and there's been too many imitators to make them effective anymore. **GRADE: C**

### **IRWIN R SHYSTER VS GREG VALENTINE**

**ED:** The Match Made in Humdrum. Valentine's winning (yawn). No, IRS is winning (Yawn). No Valentine is winning (YAWN), No IRS reverses it (YAWN!). No, I'm falling a ...**GRADE: ZZZZZ**

**JON:** While it wasn't a show stopper, it certainly slowed it down a bunch. Just for the record, IRS did win it. **GRADE: D-**

### **HOGAN & WARRIOR VS SLAUGHTER, SHEIK & KAISSEY**

**ED:** We all knew how it would come out, the only suspense was in the waiting for it to end. Finally, when the Weekend Warrior chased the Sheiks back to the dressing room, I smelled a finish. Hogan then threw fairy dust in

Slaughter's face (while Stiff Justice wasn't looking) to win. What a letdown for supposedly such a big match. Hogan then calls Stiff back from the dressing room to help him pose down for the suckers. Now we all know that Stiff is the heir apparent (In Hogan's case, the HAIR apparent) for the belt. So, by having Stiff come out and pose with him, Hogan must be giving the guy some on the job training. **GRADE: F**

**JON:** And my question is this: Did Hogan get the "Fairy Dust" from the Weekend Warrior or from Pat Patterson? Seriously, Sarge worked hard, but when you consider he had to carry the match because no one else was interested in breaking a sweat, it was pretty bad. **GRADE: D+**

### THE WEDDING

**ED:** It went off without a hitch. Figures. After boring us silly the whole night, why deviate from the pattern. Besides, we couldn't let the wedding upstage the Match Made in Hell, could we? Give the wedding a D for entertainment. The wife, however, loved it and gave it an A+ because, for once, Vince actually played something with dignity.

**JON:** The biggest shock of the night was that nothing happened. Between the Hart-Hennig match and the anticipated angle from the wedding, that's what most readers spent the money for. Oh, well, I guess Liz must have put her foot down and demanded there be no shenanigans or she wouldn't do it. I didn't grade this.

**ED:** The biggest scam in SummerScam, all told, was the \$27.50 price tag. In reality, this is merely a glorified Garden card. As such, is only worth \$9.95, and even that might be too much. But at least with Vince, everyone advertised showed up, no champion was fired before the card, and the right hand knew what the left one was doing. Vince does make the television production end look easy, but if it was really that easy, the Dustman would get it right. Come to think of it, didn't the Dustman learn anything while working for the WWF?

Here's some other news from Vinceland...Vince called the guys together before TV tapes to tell them, in all seriousness, to get off the juice. He said that as long as everyone got off the steroids, no one would notice because everyone was going to drop in size. Part of the problem, he noted, is states that have athletic commissions. According to Vince, the states can come in before a show and demand a drug test that the promotion would then be responsible to pay for. Although the test results would not be available the same night, Vince is afraid that positive results would result in tremendously bad publicity for Titan. In his speech to the troops, he cited Pee Wee Herman and how popular he was before his arrest. He said that the same thing could happen to the WWF.

Kerry Von Erich is treading on some pretty thin ice, in that case. Kerry has a tendency to run around in shirts that show off his arms. Now we'd never accuse him of anything, but we'd sure like to know what all those marks are right around the veins near his elbows. It looks like he's been

injecting something, but what, we're not sure.

The wedding may have gone with out a hitch (pardon the pun, but it was intended and Ed just let his slide by), but the reception afterwards did not. Because of Warrior's dismissal, they're going to re do some of the fall feuds and the reception will help that along. Undertaker, Paul Bearer and Jake Roberts all interrupt the proceedings and Jake's snake ends up biting Elizabeth. I'm told that the reason they didn't do this live is because they were afraid the snake bite wouldn't look real enough. This way, they can do some technical magic with it and make it look (hopefully) more real than the snake bite Ultimate Warrior suffered.

For those of you who didn't see the angle, Jake was teaching Warrior the ways of the dark side and the final test was to lock him in a room with a coffin and a snake. Warrior opens the coffin and is bitten by one of the phoniest looking snake's I've seen. Might as well been one of the blow up kind they sell at arenas. He busts through the door to get help and finds Undertaker, Paul Bearer and Jake waiting for him with Jake telling him never to trust a snake.

A lot of people have been saying how this is one of the best angles of the year. Sorry, folks, I don't think so. Angles shot without an audience that allows for second takes have never been my favorite, and this one was one of my least favorites. Effective? Yeah. It'll probably set up the Liz thing real well, but as for standing on its own, it basically sucked.

If Ric Flair does sign his contract (this is being written a couple days before the deadline) with the WWF, he will be working his first feud in the promotion with Roddy Piper. On the latest set of tapings, Heenan is out doing an interview with the NWA belt and Piper interrupts and knocks the belt out of Bobby's hands. What they are planning on is that Heenan will be Flair's advisor in order to get him over as a heel. One of Vince's main concerns at this point is the number of cross over fans who will be cheering Flair and booing Hogan when eventually the two meet.

On the latest tapings, Downtown Bruno, known here as Harvey Whippleman, came out to do an interview with Mean Gene and Gene started pushing him around. Obvious that they want Bruno to come off as a wimp. Nick Busich came out and then started pushing Gene around to protect Bruno.

Brian Knobs of the Nasty Boys had his knee scoped on the Sunday before Summerslam which makes his performance there even more amazing. After going back and watching the tape, he did look like he was trying to protect it (as were the Warriors), but still, recovery from arthroscopic surgery always amazes me.

Rockers were AWOL from the tapes, no reason given. Haku is finally leaving the promotion and going to work Japan. Slaughter was at both tapings but since they're turning him babyface, they didn't want to use him on the tapes.

Paas, the Easter egg coloring people are coming out with a WWF face paint just in time for Halloween.

## *A Guest Editorial*

Smart Fans. What a crock!

Smart fans are nothing more than a bunch of mindless zombies who go to matches to show off their superiority to the other fans around them.

Hey, dummies, take a look at the people around you. Take a look at the people you want to be considered smart next to. The three hundred pound blob of womanhood who you wonder how got so fat when she doesn't even have any teeth! The old codger who drools and can't even remember his wife's name, let alone the ring name of the heel he's booing; the beer guzzling, pot bellied, tattooed idiot who thinks he could climb in the ring and take on anyone; the seven year old kid who ought to still be wearing diapers.

These are the people smart fans want to look smart next to. If smart fans didn't know the wrestlers' real names, it would be very hard to tell the difference.

Smart fans are marked by their outward independence and their inward slavishness. They are at the mercy of the sheet editors who set the fashion trend. If Meltzer were to tell them that black is white and white is black, they would unhesitatingly step in line; You don't want to be caught out of touch with the Observer.

My evidence is the recent turning of fans from WCW to the WWF. Just because of one man, Ric Flair, fans have abandoned their precious WCW and flocked to the formerly cartoonish WWF. Can one man make that kind of difference? Did Met fans which their allegiance to the Dodgers when Strawberry went there? Did Calgary fans which when Wayne Gretsky left?

I can understand fans who say that they will now watch the WWF telecasts (admit it, I should say) because of Flair. But to say that now wrestling has something to look forward to because Flair is going to be wrestling Hogan is ludicrous. Tuning in just to see what Bobby Heenan will say next about Flair's belt is downright stupid.

As Eli Wallach said in "Magnificent Seven", "If God had not meant them to be sheered, he would not have made them sheep." Just don't wonder why I won't autograph your copy of a sheet when you stick it in my face!

□   □   □

*The preceding letter was received this past week. It was signed, but I felt it in the best interests of the worker involved to withhold his name. This is proof that Wrestling Forum will in fact print editorials from fans and/or wrestlers whose editorial viewpoint differs from our own.*

## MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

No room for results this time around because of SummerScam's report and the guest Editorial on the previous page. From the surveys sent back and the mood of the new editors, there may not be a results section anymore anyway. I'll let them tell you more about that in the next issue.

**MEDIA WATCH...***Mad Magazine*, which seems to regularly target pro wrestling with its satire, is out with a "Summer Special" with about twelve or so pages devoted to lampooning wrestling. It's mainly reprints from past issues. Cost is \$3.25 on your local newsstand. The WWF has also come out with a comic book type publication. It is called "Battlemania" and features the Sheepwhackers on the cover. You can tell the difference between this and their regular magazine because this one is drawn and the regular issue is photographed. Besides that, it's nearly impossible to tell the difference.

The latest word I have on the Flair situation is that he has NOT signed with Titan as of Monday morning. This does not mean he won't. It merely means he hasn't taken pen in hand yet.

For those of you who regularly phone in your reports, I will be taking your calls still for a while. The new editors claim to have their own sources, and I have not turned mine over to them and won't without the sources' permission. Continue to phone us here at (309) 289-2662 with info.

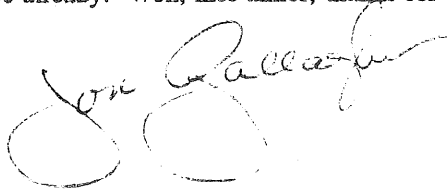
I'll be starting classes on September 16 (Boy, am I scared) so calls made after that date should be aware of my student schedule.

The Best of Wrestling Forum, a reprint of our best articles over the past five and a half years should be available by Christmas. We'll keep you informed as to how much it will be and when it will officially be available.

Last issue I told you about the phone line I'm helping out with. It's a free call for those in the Peoria area, and regular toll charges apply to anywhere else in the country (in other words, none of this \$2.00 for the first minute, 99¢ thereafter crap). I'm on Thursday afternoons. The number is (309) 672-2233. When you get a connection, choose the WIRL Sportsline from the menu. My spots are only a couple minutes long, so it won't cost you that much and no one (except your long distance carrier) makes a profit on the service. It's short, so we just cover the major headlines of the week.

We also didn't have room for reader requests this issue, so if there are any, the new guys have promised to run them next issue.

Out of space already. Well, mes amies, thanks for everything. We'll see you around.



# W R E S T L I N G FORUM

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